

Rome March 22. 1866

My dear Tom

I crave pardon of my very dear brother
that this time I am unable to show all the
attention to his friends which it would have
been my great pleasure to do, & I am sorry
to explain that illness is the cause for ever
since the loss of my gifted daughter, not only
my nerves have suffered but a general
chronic weakness has struck me
down so that I am for the present unequal
to all of my usual activity & I go about
as the people here say "like a Roman Flea"

But I need not bore you with all this
except you may chance to hear complaints
of inattention on my part

The terrible blow I bore with great calmness
indeed to my surprise, considering that I had
lost my greatest pride in this world & the
dearest companion in my art & I withdrew
from all society as far as I was able, but the
Archaeological society had to meet at my
house under my protection & so two large

conversations have taken place & my 5
large have been illuminated with 150 wax
candles, the society giving ices & tea, but all
this had nothing to do with me, except that
the gov^t would not allow the society at
all unless under my notice, so you see I
had to open house at a sad time but neither
my daughter nor Miss Winters appeared & as
for myself I was obliged to receive some
high dignitaries; - They all tell me that my
consulate looked very splendid & I think
so particularly as it cost me nothing!

Perhaps I am now a little better, but still
so weak that I can but crawl about, all this
considering my good health & activity has
been a sad drawback but yet I am ^{glad} to say
that I do not yet sink under it & look forward
to the beautiful Roman spring to restore me
tho^{as} we have had a spring all the winter so
now I fear we may a touch of winter for the
rain & cold have come on lustily & as I will
remember Rome covered with snow at Easter
so I think it may be again this year

It will comfort me to hear that you are well
recovered & that you are doing well & also that
dear Maria is better; to whom I shall shortly
send the like sum for you to receive for her.

In other respects we are very comfortable for
my daughter Eleanor is charming company &
Miss Winter also, who seems decided to remain
with us, - Eleanor is now doing all the house-
keeping with great success & tact & even saving
this pleases me very much - I take the wine
& fruit department - then we have music in
the ev. Song (abominably) glees & catches. "I
wish you may catch it."

Now I long for the hot weather for this is my
enjoyment & then I proceed with my painting.

You will be pleased to hear ^{that} all the vile
cabal against me, fell to the ground for as
I could ^{afford} to snap my finger at; so it has slunk
away by degrees & I hear no more of it - You see
a ~~previous~~ Morning Post article charged the Pope's
soldiers with being Brigands & the Swiss Troop of
Volunteers accused me with the authorship &
even induced the Pope for the moment to believe
it for this Holiness sent me a painful message
that "I sent him to the soul" all this I took no